DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 230 926 CS 007 210

TITLE Reading and Study Skills and Instruction: College and Adult; Abstracts of Doctoral Dissertations Published in "Dissertation Abstracts International," January through June 1983 (Vol. 43 Nos. 7 through 12).

INSTITUTION ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading and Communication Skills, Urbana, Ill.

PUB DATE 83

NOTE 8p.; Pages may be marginally legible.

PUB TYPE Reference Materials - Bibliographies (131) -- Reports - Research/Technical (143)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.

DESCRIPTORS Adult Education; Adults; Annotated Bibliographies; Content Area Reading; *Doctoral Dissertations; Engineers; Higher Education; Learning Processes; Questioning Techniques; *Reading Comprehension; *Reading Instruction; *Reading Research; Recall (Psychology); Self Concept; *Study Skills; *Teaching Methods; Two Year Colleges

IDENTIFIERS *Reading Strategies

ABSTRACT

This collection of abstracts is part of a continuing series providing information on recent doctoral dissertations. The eight titles deal with the following topics: (1) the relationship of training in self-generated questioning with passage difficulty and immediate and delayed retention; (2) the influence of previewing techniques on the reading comprehension of community college students; (3) the reading tasks required of engineers employed in high technology fields, and the need for developmental reading for students in baccalaureate programs of engineering; (4) the effect of three study-reading strategies on college students' comprehension and recall; (5) the effects of process-oriented reading instruction and self-concept enhancement on community college students' reading achievement; (6) the critical listening abilities of college students identified as superior, average, or poor readers; (7) compressed speech as an instructional technique for improving reading and listening competencies in adult college learners; and (8) the content, material, and teaching methods in selected college reading programs. (FL)

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Reading and Study Skills and Instruction:

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Abstracts of the following dissertations are included in this collection:

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A DESCRIPTION OF CONTENT, MATERIAL, AND TEACHING TECHNIQUES IN SELECTED COLLEGE READING PROGRAMS

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THE RELATIONSHIP OF TRAINING IN SELF-GENERATED QUESTIONING WITH PASSAGE DIFFICULTY AND IMMEDIATE AND DELAYED RETENTION

Order No. DA8301563

BALAJTHY, ERNEST PAUL, JR., ED.D. *Rutgers University The State U. of New Jersey (New Brunswick)*, 1982. 184pp. Chairperson: Martin Kling

Problem. The present study was designed to determine whether covert reader-generation of interspersed prequestions affects recall of science-oriented prose passages. Previous research had suggested that training in question generation is a prerequisite of effective results, and that differences due to amount of training, difficulty of reading material, time of criterion posttime (immediate and delayed), and type of memory could affect the usefulness of the study procedure.

Procedure. Sixty college freshmen in a basic skills reading course were divided into three groups: Group I which received five hours of practice in reader-generated questioning, Group II which received one such hour, and Control Group III which received no training.

Final evaluative testing included two science passages, at the ninth and sixteenth grade levels in readability. Subjects were instructed to read, the treatment groups receiving additional instructions to generate questions. Each passage was followed immediately and one week later by two criterion tests, a multiple choice and a fill-in test, to determine availability and accessibility of knowledge respectively.

Findings. The major findings are: (1) There was no overall effect for treatment; (2) treatment groups scored higher on the difficult passage and lower on the easier passage than the control, with Group I highest and lowest respectively; (3) a strong though not significant ($p < .06$) trend was indicated for the treatment groups to score higher on delayed and lower on immediate measures, with Group I again highest and lowest respectively; (4) no significant differences were found between the two training groups; (5) no between-group differences resulted from the two types of criterion posttests.

Conclusions. The evidence suggests that reader-generated questioning is useful for the improvement of retention of challenging material for college basic skills students, though recall of easier material may be impeded. Effectiveness is especially strong for delayed recall. After one hour of training in self-generated questions, efforts seem to reach the point of diminishing returns.

A STUDY OF THE INFLUENCE OF PREVIEWING TECHNIQUES ON THE READING COMPREHENSION OF COMMUNITY COLLEGE STUDENTS

Order No. DA8308597

BREEN, ELIZABETH JUUL, ED.D. *University of Washington*, 1982. 255pp. Chairperson: Professor Henry Reitan

This study was designed to investigate the effects of previewing techniques on the reading comprehension of community college students. Two types of previewing techniques were provided, pretests and overviews. A second purpose was to determine if pretests were more effective than overviews as a means of improving reading comprehension. An additional purpose was to investigate the differential effectiveness of pretests or overviews for high or low reading ability subjects. The varying affects of pretests and overviews on the vocabulary, factual, and inferential comprehension for high and low reading ability subjects were also investigated.

The subjects were sixty-two community college students enrolled in a reading development course. Subjects were randomly placed in a control group or one of two treatment groups, one using pretests and the other using overviews as previewing strategies. Passages used for the training of students in reading comprehension were taken from eight 2,500 word selections from *Skid Road*, a northwest history textbook. Before each reading selection, the pretest group was given pretest questions, the overview group a structured overview, and the control group vocabulary words unrelated to the reading. All subjects took a thirteen point multiple-choice posttest immediately following each of the eight reading selections. Each posttest included two vocabulary, seven factual, and three inference questions. Scores on the individual posttests were computed to form a 101 point overall comprehension posttest. Data from the posttest were analyzed by the t-test and analysis of variance. Significance levels were set at .05.

Results showed that the treatment of previewing techniques appeared to have no effect on the reading comprehension of community college students. In addition, neither treatment (pretest, overviews) proved to be more effective than the other. Results also showed that there was no interaction between reading ability (high and low reading ability) and treatment (pretests, overviews) on the total comprehension test or on vocabulary, factual, or inferential comprehension. High reading ability, however, appeared to have a significant effect on total reading comprehension as well as vocabulary, factual, and inferential comprehension.

AN INVESTIGATION OF THE READING TASKS REQUIRED OF ENGINEERS EMPLOYED IN HIGH TECHNOLOGY FIELDS AND THE NEED FOR DEVELOPMENTAL READING FOR STUDENTS IN BACCALAUREATE PROGRAMS OF ENGINEERING

Order No. DA8309722

CARNEY, GAIL MARGARET, ED.D. *Boston University School of Education*, 1983. 196pp. Major Professor: Thomas E. Culliton, Jr.

This investigation sought to determine the need for reading skills programs designed to assist engineering students at four-year colleges and universities. If a need was ascertained, a schema for such a program would be developed.

The determination of need was explored by analyzing the reading task demands placed on both engineering students and engineers presently employed in high technology fields. The reading task demands of the engineering curriculum were assessed by evaluating a random sample of student texts using the Fry Formula and a Readability Rating Sheet for College Textbooks and Professional Materials. The reading task demands of business and industry were assessed by conducting interviews with engineers representing six specialties and by examining the results of the Fry and the Rating Sheet analyses of professional materials they used to complete selected job-related assignments.

As measured by the *Nelson-Denny Reading Test* the mean total and combined mean total reading scores of three freshman classes entering the College of Engineering at a large, urban, state-supported university were compared with the descriptive information provided by the Rating Sheet and interviews and the Fry readability levels of the textbooks and professional materials. A t-test for independent samples was then used to compare the combined class mean and the mean readability levels of the texts and professional materials.

Results of this investigation did indicate that in the area of reading a wide gap exists between the achievement of college-bound high school students and the expectations of college programs and between college programs and student achievement and the expectations of the marketplace. A schema for a developmental reading program for engineering students was designed and outlined.

THE EFFECT OF THREE STUDY-READING STRATEGIES UPON COMPREHENSION AND RECALL

Order No. DA8307996

CAVERLY, DAVID CHARLES, PH.D. *Indiana University*, 1982. 247pp. Chairperson: Dr. Carl Smith

The purpose of this study was to begin an analysis of the theoretical foundations of study-reading strategies. Such an analysis was deemed necessary after a review was made of the merits of academic intervention services in higher education. To institute such an analysis, three study-reading strategies were created which addressed two theoretical orientations regarding the comprehension and recall processes. The first study-reading strategy presumed that elaborative manipulation of the information present on a page of text

would aid in literal comprehension and recall. The second study-reading strategy presumed that a direct transaction between the author's and the student-reader's knowledge bases would aid in inferential comprehension and recall. The third study-reading strategy assumed the beneficial effects of the first two strategies through a combined effort.

After piloting, a set of pragmatically useful methods and procedures were administered to a group (N = 59) of students within the situational context of a freshmen sociology class. Through two scoring systems, 28 dependent variables were measured in the immediate and delayed (one week) written free recall protocols. Using univariate oneway and repeated measures analysis of covariance tests of significance, none of the treatment conditions were found to be statistically different from each other or from a control condition though some distinct trends emerged. Moreover, it was not possible through this study to isolate the beneficial effects of each of the strategies upon short and long term comprehension and recall. Post hoc analysis revealed that academic aptitude composed most of the shared variance in many of the dependent variables with little if any shared variance predicted by the treatment conditions. It was concluded that while no legitimate statements can be made regarding study-reading strategies in general, some parameters were identified which can benefit future investigations.

A STUDY OF THE EFFECTS OF PROCESS-ORIENTED READING INSTRUCTION AND SELF-CONCEPT ENHANCEMENT ON READING ACHIEVEMENT AMONG COMMUNITY COLLEGE STUDENTS Order No. DA8229539

CURTIS, A. CHERYL, ED.D. *University of Massachusetts*, 1982. 173pp. Director: Professor Judith W. Gourley

This study was concerned with selected community college readers' perceptions of reading and of themselves as readers and the relationships of those perceptions to reading ability. It also sought to examine the effects that process-oriented reading instruction had upon those perceptions. Fifteen students in a "Reading Efficiency" class were the subjects for the study. Students took a reading placement test, responded to an attitude survey regarding reading process and reading self-concept, and orally read two essays. Twelve of the fifteen volunteered for in-depth interviews. Pre- and post-assessment of the reading placement test, the attitude survey and the oral reading were performed. The t-test of significance was used to analyze the quantitative data. A content analysis, highlighting major emergent themes of the interviews, including perception of instruction, was conducted.

T-tests results showed significant improvement in participants' attitudes about themselves as readers and in their attitudes about the reading process ($p < .05$). Miscue analysis showed that participants did not significantly improve their ability to process syntactic information but they did significantly improve their ability to process semantic information. Total comprehension loss also decreased significantly. There was no significant improvement on the Reading Placement Test.

The content analysis of the interviews supported and enriched the statistical findings. One particularly important theme from the interview data concerns the internalizations of the image of the "good" or "ideal" reader--an image gleaned from what appears to be valued in non-process instruction.

Research findings indicate that instruction and attitude of the classroom teacher are instrumental in fostering better self-concepts and in changing attitudes about the nature of the reading process. Interview data suggested that students felt empowered as a result of the process-reading instruction. Students felt they could better determine and understand important details of a particular text. They attributed this newfound ability and improved self-confidence to classroom instruction.

CRITICAL LISTENING ABILITIES OF COLLEGE STUDENTS IDENTIFIED AS SUPERIOR, AVERAGE, OR POOR READERS Order No. DA8310235

DAVIS-RICE, HELEN JEANNE, ED.D. *Hofstra University*, 1982. 157pp.

The major purposes of this exploratory study were: (1) to determine the extent and types of critical listening responses of superior, average and poor readers in the first year of college; and (2) to compare the extent of critical listening of the superior, average and poor readers. An ancillary purpose of the study was to compare the extent of critical listening when the lecture was presented to half the superior readers by means of audiotape and to the other half by videotape.

Procedure. The subjects for the investigation were drawn from the freshman population at Hofstra University. On the basis of reading ability, they were assigned to one of three groups--superior, average or poor. There were twelve students in each group.

Each student was presented a videotaped or audiotaped lecture on conditioning and directed to respond to it. After answering comprehension questions about the content, their oral retrospective responses were tape-recorded, transcribed, analyzed, and categorized according to a classification framework which reflected eight components of critical listening.

Frequency counts and percentages were used to compute the extent and types of critical listening responses. An analysis of variance was used to determine if significant differences existed among the numbers of critical listening responses of the superior, average, and poor readers. A t-test was used to determine if a statistically significant difference existed between the number of critical responses produced under the condition of either videotaped or audiotaped presentation.

Findings. Findings indicated that the subjects listened critically less than twenty-five percent of the time when responding as a group. There were variations among the groups in the distribution of types of critical listening responses.

No significant differences were found among the numbers of critical listening responses of the superior, average, and poor readers, and no significant difference was found between the number of critical responses produced under the condition of either audiotaped or videotaped presentation.

COMPRESSED SPEECH AS AN INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNIQUE FOR IMPROVING READING AND LISTENING COMPETENCIES IN ADULT COLLEGE LEARNERS Order No. DA8305123

SULLIVAN, LEROY LAWRENCE, ED.D. *University of Arkansas*, 1982. 112pp. Major Professor: Dr. David V. Loertscher

The development of a relatively new technology called compressed speech has made it possible to reproduce audio tape recordings at presentation rates much faster than normal speech without the "Donald Duck effect" distortion previously encountered. This experiment was undertaken to determine whether this technology could be effectively used to improve adult reading and listening skills. A six week training program, involving two experimental and one control group, was developed to examine this experimental question. The only difference between the two experimental groups, was the manner in which the participants were paced through the program. One group was externally paced visually using a traditional reading machine. The other experimental group was paced auditorily using audio tapes specially compressed to match the progressive rate acceleration regimen used in the visual paced treatment. All participants started training at 150 wpm and were forced paced to a 375 wpm exiting reading rate. The seventy-five university students involved were randomly assigned to one of the three groups and were required to complete alternate form pretests and posttests on reading rate, reading comprehension, listening comprehension, and speed listening. The control group was involved in skill development programs which involved no externally paced reading instruction.

Multivariate analysis of variance of the dependent variable means revealed the presence of several significant treatment effects. On all measures, the two experimental groups outperformed the control group. On the reading comprehension and reading rate measures, the visual and the auditory paced groups performed with equal superiority. The auditory paced group was, however, superior to all others on the measures associated with the learner's ability to listen and comprehend spoken instructional material presented at normal and highly compressed speeds.

It was concluded that the auditory pacing technique provided valuable incidental benefits not provided by traditional visual paced reading instruction. In addition, this technique provided cost effectiveness and flexibility advantages not otherwise realized. Examination of the longer term persistence of this experiment's treatment effects and the influence of cognitive style on the learner's performance were recommended as areas worthy of further research.

A DESCRIPTION OF CONTENT, MATERIAL, AND TEACHING TECHNIQUES IN SELECTED COLLEGE READING PROGRAMS

Order No. DA8310359

WALMSLEY, BEVERLY LEWIS, ED.D. *University of Missouri - Columbia*, 1982. 186pp. Supervisor: Peter Hasselriis

Purpose. This study described the reading instruction conducted in four college reading programs in terms of content, material, and teaching techniques. The major purpose of the study was to demonstrate that dissimilar models of reading are employed in the design of college reading instruction. A skills model implies mastering a hierarchy of subskills in order to become a proficient reader. The psycholinguistic model is language based and meaning centered and emphasizes reading in functional settings.

Procedure. In order to answer the research questions posed in this study, an instructor in each of the four college reading programs was interviewed. In each case, the person interviewed planned and conducted the reading instruction in one or more college reading classes and/or provided individualized reading instruction. Each instructor also recommeded a student who had taken a reading course or had received individualized reading instruction in the program and these students were interviewed. All interviews were tape recorded and followed the same general format.

Results and Conclusions. Based on the information given in the interviews, a narrative description of reading instruction in each program was prepared. This included course content, materials used in teaching, and methods used. Responses to specific questions concerning content, methods, and materials were grouped in order to distinguish differences among programs. Responses were further analyzed to determine the model of reading to which the teachers adhered. The findings substantiate that instruction was dissimilar in terms of content, materials, and techniques, and that it could be characterized as either predominantly skills or psycholinguistically based.

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